

Safety Lines

LogSafe:

Tips for safe brush and tree clean-up work

By Ed LaFavor, LogSafe Coordinator

Spring is a time to put winter behind us. After all the snow has finally melted, we usually find things around the yard that should be cleaned up. I think our minds are thinking that if we clean things up, summer will arrive sooner.

Here are a few important safety tips to keep you safe if your springtime clean-up includes brush and tree work.

1. Have a plan for your work: what needs to be done, what equipment will be needed, will additional help be needed.
2. Be sure to do a few stretching exercises before you start working on your project.
3. Have all the safety gear: head protection; hand protection; eye protection; hearing protection and leg protection.
4. Have your tools in good condition: chain saw, brush saw, ax, hand saws.
5. Keep a clean work area to avoid tripping and falling.
6. Keep other workers or helpers a safe distance away when using your tools.
7. Know your experience and limitations. Don't take on a task that you are not comfortable with.



These are just a few things that will help you perform your spring clean-up safely, so you can enjoy summer when it finally arrives. View safe logging videos at www.dli.mn.gov/WSC/LogSafeVids.asp.

DLI ASSISTS WITH FLOOD RESPONSE

As part of the Governor's Executive Order and the state's Emergency Operations Plan, staff members at the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) assist in flood-related response and recovery.

Members of DLI's Construction Codes and Licensing Division (CCLD) assess property damage to any state-owned property (in locales that are not delegated to local building officials) and assist any locale requesting aid.

In 2010, CCLD assisted Wadena and Freeborn County officials with on-site damage assessment.

Minnesota OSHA (MNOSHA) assists in advising other state agencies or responding groups about protection of employees during response and recovery activities.

In 2010, MNOSHA was able to distribute information cards made available by federal OSHA to responders in the Red River area.

Employers in affected areas are advised to plan ahead and consider direct impact (property protection, business continuity) and indirect impacts (employee absences, delayed production).

Further flood preparation and response information, from safely preparing sandbags to how to choose a reliable contractor, is available on the DLI website at www.dli.mn.gov/Flood.asp and at www.MinnesotaRecovers.org.

The Financial Activities category has the lowest injury and illness rates of all the industrial sectors (1.0 cases per 100 full-time-equivalent workers) and the injuries that do occur have a different pattern than in other industries.

About 600 cases involving one or more days away from work occurred in both 2008 and 2009; the survey estimates from both years were combined to examine the injured worker and injury characteristics. Here are some interesting findings you can use to impress your banker.



- Only 31 percent of the injured workers were younger than 45 years, compared with 55 percent of all private-sector injured workers.
- Forty-five percent of the injuries were due to falls, more than double the 21 percent among all injuries to private-sector workers.
- Nineteen percent of the injuries were due to overexertion, much less than the 34 percent among all injuries to private-sector workers.
- Fourteen percent of the injuries were due to repetitive motion, much more than the 3 percent among all injuries to private-sector workers.
- Consistent with the high proportion of falls, 37 percent of the injuries involved multiple traumas or bruises and contusions, compared with only 12 percent among all private-sector workers.



Kris Eiden

Kris Eiden named deputy commissioner; Gary Hall returns as assistant commissioner

Kris Eiden is the Department of Labor and Industry's new deputy commissioner. She is an attorney who has worked in both the private and public sectors.

Eiden served as chief deputy attorney general in the Minnesota Attorney General's Office from 2003 to 2007, and deputy attorney general for four years prior to that. She was an attorney in private practice from 1991 to 1998, primarily representing regulated businesses. Most recently, Eiden taught paralegal students at a local business college.



Gary Hall

Gary Hall is the new assistant commissioner for the department's Safety and Workers' Compensation Division. He was also the agency's assistant commissioner for workers' compensation in 2001.

Prior to that, Hall served as a workers' compensation judge at the Department of Labor and Industry and at the Office of Administrative Hearings since 1991. He also worked at DLI from 1984 to 1991, as an attorney and workers' compensation specialist.

'What is MNOSHA looking for?'

window washing

By Nancy Zentgraf, Southeast Area Supervisor

Minnesota OSHA (MNOSHA) has established an inspection emphasis program for window-washing activities.

Platforms

Investigators will be watching for employees using platform installations permanently dedicated to interior or exterior building maintenance of a specific structure or group of structures. They will also be watching for employees engaged in window washing from suspended or supported equipment intended to provide access to the face of a building or from working platforms of suspended units.

Fall protection

Investigators will be focused on making sure employees washing windows and employees assisting window washers are wearing appropriate personal fall-protection equipment. The investigators will also be looking at the equipment being used and evaluating whether it is set up properly.

Building maintenance

Investigators will also be focused on the buildings and the maintenance of the building as it applies to window washing or building maintenance. They will be addressing anchor points for the equipment. They will also be reviewing periodic inspection records and certification records of the related building supporting structures and anchor points.

Investigator training, inspections

MNOSHA has provided training about window-washing-related standards to staff members. Investigators may stop and conduct an inspection where window washing activities are observed.

More information

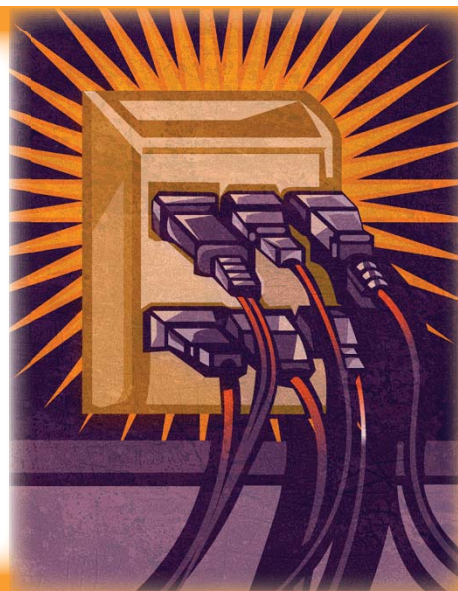
Employers can get information about standards via the DLI website – www.dli.mn.gov/Mnosha.asp, or by calling MNOSHA Compliance at (651) 284-5050 or MNOSHA Workplace Safety Consultation at (651) 284-5060.

2010 most frequently cited standards

Minnesota OSHA has released its annual reports of the most frequently cited standards overall, plus those cited in construction and those in general industry.

Topping the overall list are: Employee Right-To-Know training (606 instances); the control of hazardous energy (385); electrical wiring methods, components and equipment for general use in general industry (340); and machinery and machine guarding – general requirements (330).

To view the lists, visit the Minnesota OSHA safety information resources page at www.dli.mn.gov/OSHA/Information.asp.



HISTORY 101: Occupational Safety and Health Administration, 1970 to 2010

By Gary Robertson, MNOSHA Training Officer

The bipartisan Williams-Steiger Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 was signed into law by President Richard Nixon. This law led to the establishment of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

OSHA was officially established April 28, 1971. It ensures safe and healthful working conditions for men and women by setting and enforcing standards and by providing training, outreach, education and assistance. To accomplish this, OSHA adopted existing national consensus standards and established federal standards to provide a baseline for safety and health protection in American workplaces.

State-plans created

The OSH Act provided a degree of flexibility by allowing and encouraging any state to become involved in planning to assume its own occupational safety and health program. In 1972, OSHA approved South Carolina and Oregon to adopt and enforce the agency's standards on a state – rather than federal – level, creating the first state-plan states.

In March 1971, Minnesota Governor Wendell Anderson designated the Department of Labor and Industry and its commissioner, E.I. “Bud” Malone, as the agency and officer to research the development of a Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health plan. The plan was submitted to federal OSHA on Aug. 22, 1972; initial approval of the developmental plan was granted June 8, 1973, and the Minnesota program began operating Aug. 1 of that year. The Minnesota state-plan received final approval July 30, 1985, and federal OSHA formally relinquished its standards and enforcement authority in areas covered by the Minnesota program.

In addition to the private sector, OSHA state-plans extend OSHA coverage to state and local government workers who are otherwise not protected by the OSH Act. Currently, 27 states and territories operate OSHA-approved state-plans.

Consultation services

A separate on-site consultation program was established in 1975, a free service funded by OSHA to help small, high-hazard employers identify and correct serious hazards, train workers and supervisors to recognize workplace hazards, and develop effective safety and health management systems at their worksites. With significant financial support from federal OSHA, state-run agencies, using well-trained professional staff members, deliver these services. Since its creation, the program has made more than one million consultation visits to small businesses.

Grants

In 1978, OSHA announced New Directions Training and Education Grants (now Susan Harwood Grants) to support the development of occupational safety and health training and education programs



for workers and employers in high-hazard workplaces. Through this program, more than one million individuals have received such training.

Voluntary Protection Programs

The Voluntary Protection Programs were created in 1982 to recognize workplaces with exemplary safety and health management systems and to encourage other employers to follow suit.

OSHA responds after disasters

In 2001, following the Sept. 11 attacks, OSHA and state-plan-state staff members worked at the World Trade Center site in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., monitoring worker exposures to hazards during cleanup and recovery operations, and fit-testing and distributing respirators.

In 2005, OSHA hurricane response workers, joined by staff from state plans and on-site consultation programs, fanned out across the Gulf states to help protect workers involved in cleanup and recovery operations.

In 2007, following the collapse of the I-35W bridge in Minneapolis that killed 13 people and injured 145 others, Minnesota OSHA oversaw worker safety during rescue and recovery operations, working with the Minnesota Department of Transportation and assisted by federal OSHA. Minnesota OSHA was also on-site throughout the demolition of the fallen bridge and the construction of its replacement.

And in 2010, BP's Deepwater Horizon oil rig experienced a catastrophic explosion that killed 11 workers and resulted in an unprecedented oil spill. OSHA worked as part of the coordinated federal response, making more than 4,200 site visits to ensure BP and its contractors protected workers involved in the cleanup of health and safety hazards. To be sure workers are not inhaling dangerous levels of hazardous chemicals, OSHA took more than 7,000 independent air samples at clean-up areas both onshore and offshore, and reviewed more than 90,000 air samples taken by other federal agencies and BP.

Conclusion

OSHA safety and health standards, including those for trenching, machine guarding, asbestos, benzene, lead and bloodborne pathogens, have prevented countless work-related injuries, illnesses and deaths. In the four decades since the OSH Act became law, the nation has made dramatic progress in reducing work-related deaths and injuries. Since 1970, workplace fatalities have been reduced approximately 65 percent. Reported occupational injury and illness rates have decreased by 67 percent, but far too many preventable injuries and fatalities continue to occur. Every day, 12 workers die on the job, and each year, more than 3.3 million working men and women suffer a serious job-related injury or illness.

More information

To learn more about federal OSHA's 40-year history, visit www.osha.gov/osha40. For more about Minnesota OSHA and its programs, visit www.dli.mn.gov/Mnoshasp.

Don't miss MNOSHA's newest 'best of the worst' photos



When they are out in the field, Minnesota OSHA inspectors are always on the lookout for hazardous work practices. Some of the techniques they capture on camera have to be seen to be believed.

View the new "Best of the worst" slideshow at www.dli.mn.gov/OSHA/BestofWorst.asp.

Free construction seminar May 17: a great way to stay up to date with Minnesota OSHA

Every other month, from September through May, Minnesota OSHA offers a free morning construction seminar, focusing on topics that are of current concern in the industry.

The seminars are a great way to connect with MNOSHA in a friendly, informational setting and to get a chance to discuss important topics with MNOSHA representatives, as well as with others in the industry.

Last seminar of the season – May 17: Safety by design

This free seminar, on Tues., May 17, will be an in-depth discussion about how to eliminate hazards to employees working during the construction process and to maintenance employees working during the completion of a building. Learn important insights into how injury prevention efforts can begin upstream by involving designers, engineers and trade contractors in preconstruction processes.

Presented by Ron Spear, vice president of safety, health and environment at AMEC – a focused supplier of high-value consultancy, engineering and project management services to the world's oil and gas, minerals and metals, clean energy, water and environmental sectors. Spear has more than 20 years experience in safety management. He initially received training in the U.S. Navy as a safety and survival technician, and has continued to expand his knowledge of industrial safety for the civilian markets.

Visit www.dli.mn.gov/OSHA/ConstructionBreakfast.asp to register for the free seminar. While you're there, note the dates for the 2011/2012 season that begins in September.

At right (upper), Tim Sakry, safety director, Duinnick's Inc., discusses distracted driving and how it affects all drivers, plus what employers and employees can do to eliminate some of those distractions. At right (lower), Minnesota OSHA Director Jim Krueger explains some of the safety and health issues investigators are finding and what standards areas are being targeted.



Safety while moving patients: model program available for clinics

By Alden Hoffman, OSHA Management Team Director, Health



In the July 2010 edition of *Safety Lines*, readers were advised that facilities covered by Minnesota Statutes § 182.6554 had until July 1, 2010, to establish a written plan about how to keep employees safe when they are moving patients.

To help those facilities and to ensure their programs meet all the requirements of the Minnesota standard – including the Jan. 1, 2012, deadline – a model program has been developed by Minnesota OSHA Workplace Safety Consultation's Certified Professional Ergonomist Breca Tschida.

A copy of the model program and other resources are available on the website at www.dli.mn.gov/WSC/SPHlegislation.asp.

Minnesota businesses improve, one safety grant at a time

By Ann Kuzj, Safety Grants Coordinator, Workplace Safety Consultation

The Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) annually awards approximately \$1 million in employee safety and health improvement grants to small employers in high-hazard industries. The employer requesting the grant must match or exceed the grant dollars.

DLI obtains its grant dollars from a portion of OSHA enforcement penalties; the program is administered by Minnesota OSHA Workplace Safety Consultation.

Grant requests usually exceed the availability of funds, so proposals are prioritized as described in the information available on the Safety Grant Program Web page at www.dli.mn.gov/WSC/Grants.asp. Applications are evaluated every two months.

Examples of items approved under the grant program include:

- patient lifts to reduce manually lifting and repositioning patients;
- electric scissor lifts to reduce falls;
- trench boxes to reduce the risk of excavation collapse;
- traffic control devices to reduce the risk of struck-by injuries;
- confined space retrieval equipment to facilitate the retrieval of an injured employee;
- fall protection, such as perimeter guardrail systems, safety grates and self-retracting lanyards, to prevent falls;
- dock locks and levelers to reduce the risk of forklift injuries;
- high voltage electrical training and equipment to reduce electrical hazards;
- exhaust ventilation systems to reduce exposure to air contaminants; and
- hoists to reduce the risk of crushing injuries, strains and sprains.



The following is a summary of the safety grants awarded between Feb. 16, 2010, and Feb. 15, 2011.

| Ownership | Type of business or agency | Number of grants awarded | Total grant award | Total employer contribution | Total project cost |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Private companies | Service-patient handling | 49 | \$ 290,306 | \$ 499,809 | \$ 790,115 |
| Private companies | Manufacturing | 41 | \$ 267,458 | \$ 425,511 | \$ 692,969 |
| Private companies | Construction and utilities | 35 | \$ 229,796 | \$ 362,505 | \$ 592,301 |
| Public agencies | City or town | 23 | \$ 124,179 | \$ 191,369 | \$ 315,548 |
| Public agencies | ISD, county, state, college | 12 | \$ 71,599 | \$ 101,676 | \$ 173,275 |
| Private companies | Other service or commercial | 11 | \$ 79,914 | \$ 415,703 | \$ 495,617 |
| Private companies | Logging | 7 | \$ 56,500 | \$ 318,125 | \$ 374,625 |
| Total | All | 178 | \$1,119,751 | \$2,314,698 | \$3,434,449 |
| Average | All | | \$ 6,291 | \$ 13,004 | \$ 19,295 |

For more information, contact Ann Kuzj, Workplace Safety Consultation, at ann.kuzj@state.mn.us, (651) 284-5162 or 1-800-731-7232.

Companies recognized for superior safety standards, practices

Congratulations to the following companies, recognized during the Minneapolis Safety Day luncheon for qualifying for the Construction Health and Safety Excellence (CHASE) Minnesota program for 2011.

- Adolfson and Peterson Construction
- Berg Drywall/Plastering, LLC
- Bituminous Roadways, Inc.
- Carl Bolander and Sons Company
- Frattalone Companies, Inc.
- Graham Construction Services, Inc.
- Gresser
- Hardrives, Inc.
- Hunt Electric Corporation
- JE Dunn Construction Company
- LS Black Constructors
- Minuti-Ogle Co. Inc.
- Mortenson Construction
- Northland Concrete & Masonry Companies, LLC
- Parsons Electric
- Q3 Contracting, Inc.
- Ryan Companies US, Inc.
- Sellin Brothers, Inc.
- Truck Crane Service
- VEIT

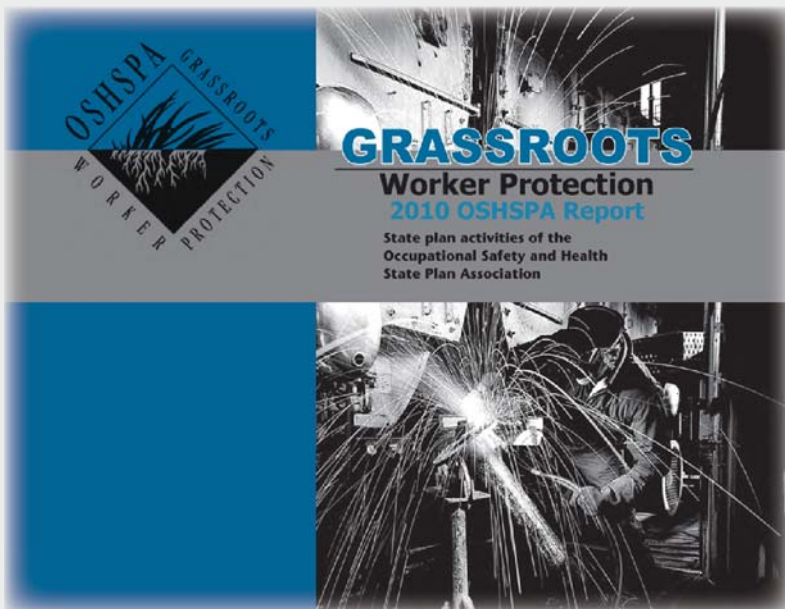


Company representatives from Adolfson and Peterson Construction receive a CHASE Minnesota recognition award from Department of Labor and Industry Commissioner Ken Peterson (second from left) and Dan Hannan of AGC of Minnesota (far right) during the Minnesota Safety Day luncheon.



CHASE Minnesota is a partnership between Minnesota OSHA and Associated General Contractors (AGC) of Minnesota designed to promote and recognize superior safety standards and practices in the construction industry. For more information visit www.dli.mn.gov/OSHA/ChaseMnPartnership.asp.

Annual OSHA state-plan update released, available online



Twenty-seven states and territories operate as OSHA state-plan states, Minnesota included, where safety and health standards must meet or exceed federal OSHA regulations.

Each year, the state-plan states' activities are summarized in *GRASSROOTS Worker Protection*, published by the Occupational Safety and Health State Plan Association (OSHSPA).

The 2010 report is available now at www.osha.gov/dcsp/osp/oshspa.

osha frequently asked questions *answers*

As part of its continual effort to improve customer service and provide needed information to employers and employees, Minnesota OSHA (MNOSHA) answers the most frequently asked questions from the previous quarter.

Q What precautions must be made for employees working near skylights?

A

Employees must be protected from falls through skylights and skylight openings. Skylights must be blocked off by guardrails or covered with screens “capable of withstanding a load of at least 200 pounds applied perpendicularly at any one area on the screen,” states 1910.23(a)(4) and (e)(8). During construction activities, either guardrails or covers may be used to abate the fall hazard. Covers must be able to hold twice the weight of the employee(s), material and equipment that may be placed on them.



Q When are audible back-up alarms required on equipment?

A

The OSHA construction standards, 29 CFR 1926.601 and .602, specify audible reverse signal alarms be used whenever a motor vehicle or earthmoving equipment operator has an obstructed view behind the vehicle. The only exception is when another employee signals the operator that it is safe to back up.

Back-up alarms must be loud enough to be heard over the surrounding noise. The use of intermittent alarms that sound only when the presence of another employee is detected is permitted. Strobe lights can be used as a substitute for back-up alarms in general industry, but not in construction; they can be used to supplement audible back-up alarms in both. Cameras that provide the equipment operator “an unobstructed view to the rear” are acceptable alternates.

The use of back-up alarms in general industry is not required. Any addition of an alarm system to a forklift must be approved either by the manufacturer or a registered professional engineer.



Do you have a question for Minnesota OSHA? To get an answer, call (651) 284-5050 or send an e-mail message to osha.compliance@state.mn.us. We may feature your question here.

Safety Council conference offers workplace safety solutions

By Ann Kulenkamp, Communications Director, Minnesota Safety Council

Workplace safety and health representatives can "Stay Connected" at the 77th annual Minnesota Safety and Health Conference, presented by the Minnesota Safety Council, May 11 through 13, at the Minneapolis Convention Center.

The event provides an opportunity to learn about trends, tools and practical solutions that will reduce injuries and related costs. It features local and national experts leading nearly 100 educational sessions; continuing education credits and certification points; networking opportunities; and more than 100 exhibitors from across the country.

On Fri., May 13, the Governor's Safety Awards will be presented, recognizing Minnesota workplaces that have achieved exceptional performance in safety. The event will also include recognition from Minnesota OSHA of 2010 Minnesota Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (MNSHARP) and Minnesota Star (MNSTAR) program recipients.

Speakers will tackle critical issues in workplace safety and health, including employee involvement, leadership, organizational culture and numerous

specific safety topics. In-depth full- and half-day classes complement shorter breakout sessions. Behind-the-scenes tours will examine safety operations at the Minnesota Twins stadium, the internationally recognized E.J. Ajax metal forming plant, the Metropolitan Airports Commission Field Maintenance Facility, Minneapolis Fire Station #6 and the Minneapolis Convention Center.

For more information about the conference, call the Minnesota Safety Council at (651) 291-9150 or 1-800-444-9150, or visit www.minnesotasafetycouncil.org/conf/11index.cfm.

The Minnesota Safety Council, founded in 1928, is a nongovernmental, not-for-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life in Minnesota by preventing unintentional injuries and deaths.



Minnesota's newest MNSHARP worksites



Lakeside Foods, Owatonna, Minn.



Starrett, Tru-Stone, Waite Park, Minn.

Lakeside Foods, Owatonna, Minn., and Starrett, Tru-Stone, Waite Park, Minn., are the newest worksites to earn Minnesota Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (MNSHARP) status from Minnesota OSHA. MNSHARP recognizes companies whose managers and employees work together to develop safety and health programs that go beyond basic compliance with all applicable OSHA standards and result in immediate and long-term prevention of job-related injuries and illnesses. Learn more at www.dli.mn.gov/WSC/Mnsharp.asp.